



Milwaukee County

Supervisor Joseph Rice, 6th District

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For Immediate Release
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SUPERVISOR RICE INTRODUCES COUNTY LOBBYING REFORM MEASURE TO ENHANCE REGISTRATION AND REPORTING SYSTEM

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee, WI– Milwaukee County Supervisor Joseph Rice will introduce a resolution to be considered by the County's Judiciary Committee on Thursday, September 16th that would significantly enhance the regulation of those lobbying Milwaukee County officials.

"The public must have confidence that county government business is being conducted free of undue influence," said Rice. "This measure will lead to greater transparency in county government and helps assure the public that elected officials are acting in the public interest."

Rice's resolution calls upon the Milwaukee County Corporation Counsel and Milwaukee County Board staff to draft a system of registration and reporting by those seeking to influence legislative or administrative action by county elected and appointed officials. Such a system should be designed to achieve the following:

- Establish reasonable registration requirements to identify lobbyists and principals who seek to influence legislative or administrative actions;
- Require lobbyists and their principals to submit a detailed description of the nature of lobbying efforts;
- Require lobbyists and their principals to submit expense statements that accurately describe the financial value of the lobbying effort, including expenses and pro-rated salaries or fees of lobbyists and principals involved in the effort;
- Establish a reasonable system of enforcement and sanctions for violations; and
- Revise the existing registration fee structure for lobbyists and create a fee structure for principals.

"This resolution sets in motion a process to obtain advice from County Corporation Counsel and Milwaukee County Board staff which can be translated into reasonable and enforceable requirements of

lobbyists," said Rice. Rice noted that the City of Milwaukee is currently in the process of enacting lobbying regulations and urged Milwaukee County Board staff to seek collaborations with the city on registration and/or reporting systems. Costs of administering the regulations would be recouped through a system of lobbying fees.

Rice further indicated that while the current County Code of Ordinance has a provision requiring that lobbyists register with the County Clerk, only a handful of lobbyists have done so. "The current ordinance is not well known, well understood or enforced. And without a more structured approach and a reporting requirement, the public has no way of knowing who is attempting to influence their county officials," Rice added.

The Milwaukee County Board Judiciary Committee will consider the resolution at its September 16, 2004 meeting.

Supervisor Rice represents Milwaukee County's 6th Supervisory District which includes the City of Milwaukee and the municipalities of Brown Deer, River Hills, Bayside, Fox Point, Whitefish Bay and Shorewood.

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